

Library Science

Rack

Lib In

*E
671
L66
v54
#7*

ASSOCIATION OF
ASSISTANT
LIBRARIANS

University of Michigan
University Library
Library Science Library

AUG 1 1961

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

VOLUME 54
NUMBER 7
JULY 1961

LIBRACO

are the makers of

**L I B R A R Y
F U R N I T U R E
and
E Q U I P M E N T**

**It is the best in
DESIGN
QUALITY
WORKMANSHIP
and FINISH**

*It is used all over the world
and
gives a lifetime of service*

**Illustrated lists, designs, and estimates free from
Lombard Wall, Woolwich Road
CHARLTON, S.E.7**

Telephone: GREENWICH 3308/9





CEDRIC CHIVERS LTD.

PORTWAY, BATH

**BOOKBINDERS
AND
BOOKSELLERS**

**TELEGRAMS
"DUROFLEX," BATH**

**TELEPHONE
7355, BATH**

G. BLUNT & SONS LTD.

Established 1879

**LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS
AND BOOKSELLERS**

**EUROPEAN AGENTS FOR RANGANATHAN AND
VISWANATHAN LIBRARY TEXTBOOKS**

Showroom :
100 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.
Telephone: MUSEUM 5650 and 0335

Head Office and Works :
NORTH ACTON ROAD, HARLESDEN, LONDON N.W.10
Telephone: ELGAR 7411-2-3

WOOLSTON

HAVE YOU SEEN OUR STOCK
OF OVER 900 FICTION
AND 750 NON-FICTION
**OVERSTOCK and REMAINDER
TITLES**

WHICH WE HAVE ON DISPLAY
AT

***200 Gt. Portland Street.,
London, W.1.***

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: PETER LABDON
Central Library, Southgate, Stevenage

VOL. 54 NO. 7.

JULY, 1961.

Comment

Commonwealth Technical Training Week was heralded with a blare of publicity worth every decibel to any librarian fortunate enough to be able to participate in it. To the profession, the main attraction was probably the chance to attract the attention of the public to the range of printed material available on a multiplicity of careers. This was an opportunity not to be missed.

The cause of librarianship as a career, however, can hardly have been enhanced by the printed matter put out by the Library Association, which was catastrophic. Both the poster and the leaflet carried the slogan —'Be a librarian'. Since the object of both appeared to be to persuade the public that we are all stodgy creatures without a glimmer of imagination one can only ask, more in sorrow than in anger: why?

The poster, in green and white, listed a selection of the responsibilities undertaken by the average librarian, superimposed on a large question mark. Top of the list, for some reason best known to the designer, was 'Illustrations collections', a wildly fascinating occupation. 'Reference enquiries' came fifth, just above 'Extension activities'. Any vertical order carries an implication of priority, even though none is intended. The implication that looking after an illustrations collection is an important, let alone a universal, part of librarianship is totally erroneous.

And what of the leaflet which accompanied it? In design, pedestrian; in conception, uninspired; in appeal, lacking. No colour, no imagination and above all, no conviction. True, it will do no damage to the sensibilities of those reading it, but it will not encourage them to look further into the possibilities the profession holds.

Through the week the local library should have provided the one essential service—the service only the library *could* give—to supplement the aim of the exhibitions arranged: it should have provided information and help to scores of young people and their parents anxious about careers. What a tragedy in its own publicity the Library Association could not have reflected the urgency and importance of that service. An opportunity buried in the ground.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE POSITION OF THE A.A.L. IN 1961 AND ITS ROLE IN THE FUTURE

by G. W. Thompson, Whessoe Limited, Darlington.

With the reorganisation of the L.A. partially accomplished and the setting up of a sub-committee of the A.A.L. council "to review the constitution of the Association as a whole",* the time would seem to be ripe for a re-appraisal of the position and functions of the A.A.L. as it exists today. Unfortunately it seems already certain that the *status quo* will be officially blessed and perpetuated. It is too much to expect the A.A.L.'s own sub-committee to recommend any of the basic changes needed to restore the A.A.L. to usefulness in our modern library world. In that light these notes are perhaps little more than a theoretical exercise. They are written, however, in the hope that at the next reorganisation but one they may be relevant and that out of that future reorganisation something really useful may emerge.

At present the A.A.L. exists as a parallel organisation to the L.A. This is obviously wrong. It weakens and divides the profession when the profession needs unity more than ever before. The only way to return the A.A.L. to its original *raison d'être* and to give the young professional librarian a chance is to impose an age limit as a condition of membership. This suggestion (from the L.A.) was recently thrown out by the A.A.L. council, and the L.A. has since weakly acceded to representations from the A.A.L. about it. Of the Council which threw the idea out only three members must, by the rules of the Association, be under 30. Is this a case of self-preservation being the first law of man? It would be interesting to know what proportion of the A.A.L. membership is under 30 or under 35. At the moment the President and Treasurer of the Association were elected to L.A. membership in 1931 and 1930 respectively. They are both admirable men no doubt, but scarcely in the first bloom of youth. Where are the youth of the profession which the A.A.L. is supposed to represent? The proposal (*Assistant Librarian*, May, 1961) to hold a presidential dinner for future A.A.L. presidents would further the parallel to the L.A. By tradition only chiefs are excluded from A.A.L. membership. Who, then, does the A.A.L. represent who is not already adequately represented in the L.A.? And following logically from this, why should the A.A.L. in its present form have any representatives on the L.A. council, never mind five? The argument against an age limit, that experienced men would be lost to professional activities, does not hold water. If the man is any good he will graduate naturally to L.A. branch committees and to the L.A. Council. If he is no good there is no loss.

The question then is how a re-vitalised A.A.L. could most usefully serve the interests of the younger part of the profession. A student's section would be an obvious part of the A.A.L. 99 per cent of all library students should be members of the new section and they would form upwards of 50 per cent of the A.A.L. membership. The A.A.L., com-

prising as it would students and those professionally qualified people who could still remember their own examination tribulations (i.e. those under 35) would be a sufficiently well-balanced body to make authoritative criticisms of the examination set up. Many of the A.A.L.'s present functions could be suitably enlarged and included in this field, e.g., textbook publication, educational visits, scrutiny of examination papers for unfair questions, etc. Correspondence courses, it seems, will die a natural death in the near future. The resurrection of the thesis as an examination method combined with an A.A.L. covering youth interests could lead naturally to a research section in the A.A.L. A push from below in this sphere would do the L.A. no harm and subjects crying out for research are legion. Practical research could be carried out by teams of A.A.L. members. Experience gained in this field would be of great use to any librarian for the rest of his professional career. Another field in which the A.A.L. could usefully interest itself is composed of those professional activities which the L.A. exams and the Library Schools scarcely touch but which are vital to any professional librarian. Public speaking springs to mind in this category, public relations and committee work are others where librarians too often continue to be amateurish. These and many other subjects need much more time, effort and enthusiasm spent on them. The A.A.L. could provide those things.

Another of the present faults of the A.A.L. is its municipal library mindedness. At the moment the President, Honorary Secretary, and Honorary Treasurer are all municipal library men. This tendency is probably due to the fact that municipal librarians have never had a section of their own and have come to regard the A.A.L. as theirs. A start has been made to rectify this. More can be done. Before 35 it is reasonable to assume that a librarian has not become set in his ways. This is the time to foster the sense of the unity of the profession in librarians and emphasise the similarities in the various fields of librarianship rather than the differences. If the A.A.L. could contribute to this they could really point to their achievements with pride.

Until the general principles guiding the A.A.L. have been amended all ideas for its future must remain theoretical. Perhaps the recently created sub-committee will do some fundamental re-thinking though the likelihood is remote. Let them consider whether any similar professional body to the L.A. tolerates a comparable organisation to the A.A.L.—as is now stands—within it. Let them also consider the position of the A.A.L. with regard to the good of the profession as a whole with as little self-interest or anti-L.A. prejudice as possible. Last and most important let them remember that the A.A.L. is for the youth of the profession.

There are only a few ideas in this article and none of them new, or considered in detail, as critics will no doubt soon point out. The answer is that there will be no lack of ideas if youth is given its head in the A.A.L. And the details will work out too.

**See page 142 for a note on the Constitution and work of the Re-organisation Sub-Committee.—EDITOR.*

MARRIED WOMEN IN LIBRARIES

by Mrs. S. Simsova, Finchley Public Library.

The number of women in the profession is increasing rapidly and yet little attention is paid to their problems. While with regard to the teaching profession the 'Come Back' advertisements can be seen on all sides the problem of women in librarianship remains almost unnoticed, even in our own press. Occasionally there appears a letter complaining of the major difficulties waiting for women librarians in their jobs. In a recent letter of this kind (*Assistant Librarian*, May, 1961), Mrs. Glass draws the conclusion, in the light of her own experiences, that few women will find it worthwhile to qualify.

It is a waste both from the viewpoint of national economy and the individuals concerned to prevent qualified people from doing jobs for which they have been trained and to discourage new entrants from taking their examination through the fear that they will not be able to use their qualifications if they happen to be women. In this article I would like to examine the position from the viewpoint of a woman who does not let herself be discouraged. What are her chances?

If she decides to stay single her position is not too bad. With the present shortage of men in the profession she is bound to find some promotion although her progress is probably going to be slower than that of her male colleagues. In her professional life she will have nearly equal chances with men; in her personal life, however, she will be denied full development. Very likely she will choose to marry as most of her male colleagues do. After their marriage many women nowadays carry on with their work. No librarian can lose her job through marriage; what she loses are her prospects of promotion. By being married she is expected to be less seriously interested in her profession. This becomes apparent to her when she applies for her first new job. Quite possibly she is going to be interviewed about her domestic life rather than her professional experience and ability. Few authorities will deny her a job if she proves her intentions to be really serious, especially if there are no male candidates and if the grade is not too high. I think that in this respect Mrs. Glass must have been especially unlucky. Having changed my job several times in the last ten years I can say that I have been treated fairly in competition with men in most interviews, in spite of being married. It seems that the conditions are improving all the time there are many more married women in responsible positions than there used to be.

The second critical period will come with the arrival of her first child. I expect that very few married men among librarians would deny that they have improved their qualifications as human beings through being fathers. This is bound to be reflected in their work and therefore both men and women librarians should be encouraged not only to qualify professionally, but also to develop their personal life fully. Probably most women, given the choice, would stay with their children until they grow up and then come back to their profession. They would come back with more experience and with a capacity for detached judgment to gain which the academic staff of universities are sent for long periods of

Sabbatical leave. Unfortunately it does not seem to be possible to do this; at least very few women succeed in it. In most cases a woman's career does not finish with marriage, as Mrs. Glass suggests, it finishes when she leaves her job to have children. All her qualifications are wasted for the rest of her life including the many years when her children will no longer depend on her.

The present superannuation regulations relating to public libraries make a return to local government after a period of absence difficult. In addition to the usual prejudices against women, married women, women with children—there is the handicap with regard to superannuation of costing the employing authority more than those with an uninterrupted record of service. The chances are that on her return a woman will get only a temporary non-professional job. There are a few lucky ones who have managed to come back to more responsible positions, but most women fail through lack of understanding on the part of the employing authorities.

Thus it seems that if a woman does not want to waste the many years spent on her study and give up all prospects of being able to earn later in life the money she is entitled to by her qualifications she has to carry on with her employment while bringing up her family. This is a

BERKSHIRE BOOKBINDING

Co. Ltd.

Library Bookbinders

Resewing

Recasing

**Plastic Bindings
for Fiction and
Non-Fiction**

PROMPT SERVICE

**27, Eldon Terrace
Reading, Berks.**

Telephone: Reading 56683.

KEESING'S

 **30 YEARS' SERVICE
TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Progress Report No. 2**

KEESING'S is available in the Public Libraries of all but three Cities, Boroughs and Urban Districts in the British Isles, having a population of over 50,000—158 of their subscriptions being placed by Municipal and 32 by County Authorities.

CRAMER'S for MUSIC

**MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING**

**139, New Bond Street
London, W.1**

★ Complete Music Service Provided

very difficult task. What provisions are there for the few who either have to or want to do it?

Maternity leave in local government seems fairly generous. According to the Charter a woman is entitled to eleven weeks before and seven weeks after the birth of the child. The first month is on full pay, the rest on half pay plus Maternity Allowance. Further leave without pay is left to the discretion of the employing authority. This takes good care of the welfare of the expectant mother as most women can work longer than eleven weeks before the baby is due. The seven weeks after the expected date of birth of the child are much too short even if the baby arrives on time which is not always the case. Some babies are several weeks late which shortens the period even more. The mother may be certified as physically fit at the end of six weeks, but it takes much longer to recover full strength again. According to the Charter it is possible to get a further extension of leave without pay. I doubt that any authority would be sympathetic to this kind of request, seeing that some of them are even unwilling to grant leave for study purposes. Later on, as the baby outgrows its first clothes and the mother regains her former fitness, it is not so difficult for her, but it would be easier if mothers with small children could have part-time work. More authorities should follow the example of the L.C.C. who offer part-time professional work in their school libraries.

To sum up: women in the profession should be encouraged to qualify. They should not be asked to sacrifice their personal life to the profession. Marriage and family should be an accepted part of their life, because it is through them that their personalities can be fully developed. The most satisfactory solution for a woman is to retire for a few years when she is expecting her first child and she should have no fears about the future—about not being able to come back. More part-time qualified jobs should be provided to make it possible for her to return sooner. Finally, for those who do not wish to interrupt their service, there should be better understanding of their problems, longer maternity leave and more moral support from their colleagues. Not all children whose mothers go out to work are neglected or grow up to become juvenile delinquents and working mothers do not love their children less.

As a word of encouragement to those women who wonder whether to qualify because their career would come anyway to an end, I would like to add that there are enlightened authorities who do not discriminate against women as can be seen from the fact that I was given a well-graded job when my baby was six months old.

OUT OF PRINT AND ALL NEW BOOKS

By return of post from

LEON DRUCKER,

25, Dacey Ave., London, N.W.2

(Gladstone 1581)

Please write for free lists.

HAS TV CHANGED OUR READING HABITS ?

by John O'Riordan, Finchley Public Library.

Reading is part of our basic education, and the heritage of our civilisation. We derive knowledge mainly through reading. Of course, there are "visual aids" and no one would be so foolish (not even librarians) as to underestimate the influence of television, films and the theatre. But these all have their limitations, which, compared with reading, offer very restricted opportunities for selection. You must take what is provided at a given time: a choice, perhaps, between two channels on T.V., and possibly three cinema programmes in your district if you are lucky. The book-reader's opportunities for selection, on the other hand, are only limited by his own pocket and by his proximity to the local library.

But reading is more than just translating printed or written words into actual or imagined sounds. It is letting the author's words germinate in the mind, generating fresh systems of thought and stimulating the imagination to greater and infinite possibilities. No other activity, not even watching television, achieves this and gives quite the same source of pleasure. With a good book you can always enjoy the company of an author you like and respect. Meeting the author in print is much more fun than seeing the man in the flesh and, oh, how odious and wearisome some of those T.V. personalities can be!

Nevertheless, we all remember from our 'reading aloud' days at school the satisfaction of a shared experience when a skilled interpreter or commentator gave a fuller vision to our own private reading and words and phrases which previously meant little to us as individual readers became more meaningful. This is precisely the effect of television. The programme-planners and T.V. spokesman do the interpreting for us, while we sit back and watch the screen and vistas of other worlds are opened before our eyes. No mental effort or concentration is required. Easy to see where the mass appeal comes in. Reading, however light and escapist in trend, whether it be the latest Agatha Christie or Cronin, demands concentration. Not so with T.V. In fact, 'looking-in' offers a more acceptable means of mental relaxation than reading a book.

If this is the case, why is it alleged that more people are reading than ever before? First, let us make certain whether they are. All we know is that book-borrowing from public libraries has definitely increased each year, and librarians tell us that television has stimulated reading. Whilst it is true, I think, that T.V. has aroused popular interest in such lesser-known subjects as archaeology, animal-behaviour, bird-lore, medicine, etc., I am not prepared to believe that T.V. has over-night turned us into a nation of bookworms. It may well be that the prices of books are responsible for more people borrowing from public libraries. If we ask whether more people are buying books than they used to, I would say, to judge by the interiors of some houses, I do not think so. People will spend no end of money on records and cigarettes, but not on books. Some even imagine they possess a proud, personal library if they have a book-case full of paperbacks.

Both reading and viewing need undivided attention and, therefore, are competing for the use of our leisure time. (After all, the day has still only twenty-four hours). The conclusion to be drawn, surely, is that less time is being spent in reading than before, unless people are sitting

up half the night reading a book, which seems unlikely. Anyone who looks at the extreme feebleness of most of the programmes which are being seen can be forgiven for thinking that a return to former reading habits is only a question of time. If the late Sir Thomas Beecham's opinion—"Two thirds of television is for half-wits"—is true (and I am bound to say that I agree with him) then those who take fullest advantage from reading must be reckoned among the bookish minority, whilst the rest of the nation must, on that assumption, be branded as half-wits. Three-quarters of the population now have T.V. sets, and a fair proportion of these are rented. If there is one thing an Englishman likes it is his 'moneysworth', and no amount of drivel on the screen will induce him to forego his evening's viewing. And books, along with many other things, will take second place.

That being so, there is no great cause for alarm. Reading can be summed up as the communication of ideas by means of the printed or written word. We should treat television as just another means for the communication of ideas. Cinema, radio, the theatre, and now television are all allied media for the transmission of ideas.* They can be misinterpreted and abused, and often are, but none are evil in themselves. There are book-addicts and T.V. fanatics (the second being the more dangerous!), but these are not typical of the national trend. When every household has a television set—and that day is fast approaching—then, perhaps, we shall learn to live with T.V., as we do with radio or the gramophone. It will then be looked upon as one more means of relaxation along with reading, listening, and (a dying art, I fear) polite conversation.

**Allan Brockett, "The Future of Reading," Library World, November, 1954.*

DUNN & WILSON Limited

OF FALKIRK and MORLEY

OFFER A COMPLETE REBINDING SERVICE
AT COMPETITIVE PRICES

Lists of juvenile picture story books,
penguins and paper backs available in
special bindings may be had on request

TELEPHONE 1591-2 FALKIRK

TELEPHONE 219 MORLEY

Correspondence

Bibliography and Book Selection

It is always pleasant to find that somebody has read what one has written, and still more so to discover that it has been remembered. But Mr. O'Riordan's kindly remark might lead people to think that I am just a beatnik bibliographer, one who mocks the idols of our tribe. That, Sir, I must deny. Of course, it is inevitable that something written in haste and probably a bad temper should make more impact than a calm, considered composition, such as an appeal for a better salary or a more than usually costive article on information retrieval. That does not alter the fact that people are still failing in bibliography in some profusion. I find this sad, because bibliography is a fascinating subject when looked at in the right way.

The wrong way was typified for me, in a quite different field of knowledge, when I was one of a number of unwilling souls set to learn the innermost workings of firearms from a corporal loaded with long service and good conduct stripes. We found his instruction tedious, partly because we had been told by our mothers never to mess about with such things, partly because the corporal believed that it was enough to know the names of the bits; to know how they worked was none of our business. When one day he told us that this particular hole was called the aperture the class was divided into two schools of thought: those who now realized that the whole thing was a fiddle, and those who felt that their previous education had been neglected to a degree now past all amendment. One way or the other, the precious rapport with the instructor was lost.

Now any syllabus tends to embalm a subject, but it is the job of those who teach it, and of those who learn it, to make the dry bones dance if they can. It is less facts that are to be learnt than processes, chains of developments, causes and more or less logical effects. Think of the sixteenth century author willing to let his work be mauled by some low printer to reach his public and some money, think of the spivvish private press turning out things (usually 'Daphnis and Chloe') in unmentionable type-faces to catch the smart market, think of the bibliographical wide boys, the Wises and Rosenbachs, tripping up the pot-hunters who ought to have stuck to cigarette cards if they didn't want to get nipped. Some of this, and the friskets and the cancels look a little more homely.

We want pat answers too often in librarianship, and the joy of the profession should be that it grows as its subject matter grows. There are plenty of excuses for turning even bibliography into a dull grind, a set of half-understood, dubiously authenticated 'facts' which are mopped up by the student, spread out to please the examiners, and forgotten. But a little imagination will never do any harm, so that a hand press will retain something of the sputnik effect it had when it was first used, or behind a Kelmscott book can be seen great Morris, foreseeing a better world. And all this is more relevant to the information scientists juggling with coded microfilm than they would sometimes have us believe, or than we might fear.

We, after all, are not printers, paper-makers, or wealthy bibliophiles. We therefore must be liable to regard as dry technical jargon what to those in the business is living talk, but, in return, the librarian should be able to see from his own peculiar angle a wider view than the specialist. Whether someone who will handle *Chemical Abstracts* more often than Caxtons should know much historical bibliography is perhaps arguable—though my answer, which would take long to expound, is 'Yes, and there's no such thing as historical bibliography anyhow'. While the subject is studied, however, I would plead that the Parts of a Book, and all the owlsh approach they represent, should be given a quiet burial, and that bibliography should be seen, not as the study, without the benefit of being able to practise them, of various arts and crafts, some dead or dying, but as meaningful knowledge for civilized practical librarians.

A. C. BUBB, *Royal Technical College, Salford.*

In your 'Comment' for May you appeal for suggestions about the typography and lay-out of the *Assistant Librarian*; on page 101 Mr. O'Riordan intimates that an interest in bibliography is the esoteric concern of a lunatic fringe. "One profession"?

Surely it is reasonable to expect knowledge of and interest in the physical form of our charges—books are not merely objects that materialise from the bookseller; they vary in make-up almost as much as in content and appearance can make a considerable difference to the readability of a book.

Does Mr. O'Riordan really not give a damn what his books look like or how they have been produced? Among the 'rubbish in print' of which he speaks is much shoddy and non-durable book-production against which one hopes he will tend to discriminate when making his selection. If librarians hope to improve things in this direction it is essential that they know what is involved in making books. Some of us *are* interested in printing, paper and binding and despite Mr. O'Riordan our interest is not academic and esoteric. This aspect of bibliography is after all concerned with a fundamental part of the tools of our trade.

PETER A. HOARE, *Student, University of London School of Librarianship and Archives.*

The letter from John O'Riordan prompts me to make my usual plea for a work on book-selection. Existing text-books are pre-war, and important contributions to the subject in journals are few (*vide "Five years' work in librarianship"*). The conclusion is, therefore, that either there is nothing, or nothing new, to say, or that no one is brave enough or sufficiently qualified to write one. I cannot believe either of these to be true.

Book selection and stock editing are surely the most important tasks of the practising librarian—even though this is regrettably not reflected in the new examination syllabus. There must be room for a text-book on general principles and administrative aspects, and our journals should be crowded with discussions of current practice and problems. The nearest we get are those interminable arguments on the provision of light fiction in public libraries, where discussion is of categories, and not as it should

be, of titles and series. A notable exception was an article on stock editing by A. C. Jones in the *Library World* towards the end of last year.

I should be pleased to know if a general text-book is being planned, and to hear views on the subject.

PAUL N. TURNER, *Islington Public Library*.

The Assistant Librarian

Mr. White is certainly voicing my opinion of the new cover of the *Assistant Librarian*, and in fact rouses me to voice it for myself. The former cover, I seem to remember, was rather pleasantly designed and no assistant librarian would have been ashamed to be seen carrying it. This is more than can be said for the new one. Any dweller in the great world outside which we are so anxious to impress might be forgiven for assuming that we, like our official organ, are crude, tasteless and cheaply produced. If we were salmon-pink, too, it wouldn't be surprising. Any one who has studied typography (and who hasn't?) ought to be blushing.

As Mr. Saunders-White suggests, comparison with the *Library Association Record* would prove salutary. The enormous improvement in its appearance has made it really a pleasure to look at. Of course, a professional-looking job like this costs money. I think it is money well spent. Whatever the reason for the new cover there is no excuse for the choice of that unforgivable 'shadow' titling so reminiscent of the cut-price grocer, the village jumble-sale and the handbill left by the rag-and-bone man—and I hope no one detects any analogies there, for none were intended.

MARY PEARCE, *Buckinghamshire County Library*.

May I comment further upon your reply in the May *Assistant Librarian* to my earlier criticism of the new cover?

Firstly my limited knowledge of typography (gained mainly from passing Group B) was the basis of my criticism as you point out but in the question of the present cover instinct and taste would suffice. Secondly, that readers of the *Assistant Librarian* should be asked to "do us all a favour" by providing suggestions seems to me to be all wrong. Surely the person responsible for the existence of the journal should be in that position by education, qualification, taste and enthusiasm in order to set an example for us ignorant readers and students to follow?

However, here for what they are worth are my humble suggestions and constructive criticisms:—

- (a) I am personally not very fond of the type face used which I think is Gill Shadow—this is at its best on a coated paper in black.
- (b) The choice of pink plus a fairly rough paper was an unhappy one and does not do the type face justice.
- (c) By printing in brown the typeface looks a little fuzzy and indefinite.
- (d) The actual layout I have no great quarrel with.

Suggestions for improvement.

- (a) Use a coated paper or a smoother paper with or without colour.
- (b) Or, alter the colour perhaps to a pale blue, pale yellow or terracotta whilst printing in black—my preference being for Albertus or perhaps Ultra Bodoni italic faces.

These suggestions refer to the cover as it is at present. I would like to see the whole of the *Assistant Librarian* redesigned by an expert artist typographer if financially possible so as to set an example for students of bibliography and as a help towards the much needed status for librarians.

NORMAN SAUNDERS-WHITE, *Herefordshire County Library*.

I like the new cover.

P. V. SPOONER, *Camberwell Public Library*.

I like Mr. Spooner.—ED.

Status

Librarian—hurrah—Social Class I
That is what Ian Wilkes says has been done
By the Register Office. Now, I wonder why?
I'm so overcome I could sit down and cry
For the sheer joy of it. But alas in Class III
Along with the typists and barmaids, I see
Is a group we know well, the poor L.G.O.,
So I don't sit and cry, I just puff and I blow.
Class-classifying, a blatant example
I says to myself. Now which shall I sample?
To hell with the local, I'll fill me with joy
I'll transfer to Special like dear R. J. Hoy,
And if they won't have me, I'll not go all glum
I'll stay in the local as just one more bum!

JACK DOVE, *Hove Public Library*.

A.A.L. Panel of Tutors

Vacancies have occurred in the panel for tutors in English literature (Registration Divia (i) and (ii).). Would Fellows interested in this work please write to Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21, who will supply full details.

REVIEW

British Education Index London, Library Association, 1961.

In 1954 the librarians of Institutes of Education of British universities began publication of the *Index to selected British educational periodicals*, issued three times a year to a restricted number of subscribers, and it is a pleasure to see the first thirteen issues of this cumulated as *British education index* (under which title the four-monthly issues are now appearing) and made more widely available.

The need for such an index hardly needs stressing; for its only rival, the H. W. Wilson Company's *Education Index* is devoted mainly to American periodicals, indexing not more than half a dozen British ones. While the *British education index* does not attempt to be exhaustive in its coverage, it indexes some fifty periodicals, all British with the exception of the *International review of education*. Of these about half are purely educational periodicals, including all the principal research journals, and are indexed in their entirety; the others are journals in related fields or concerned with subjects of the curriculum, and are indexed only so far as "matter of direct educational interest" is concerned. For the cumulation, entries have been drawn from the *Subject index to periodicals* for educational articles in non-educational periodicals: a useful addition. The phrase "direct educational interest" has been quite liberally interpreted, especially in the field of psychology; the *Journal of experimental psychology* has been completely indexed, and a wide selection made from other psychological journals.

There is, however, some restriction in subject-matter that may not be immediately obvious. Originally it was decided not to index periodicals devoted to adult education, that subject being already covered elsewhere, and *Adult education* was added to the periodicals indexed only in 1957, although articles on the subject appearing in those periodicals that were indexed have appeared from the start. A similar decision, though unavowed, seems to have been made about educational administration. *Education* was added only at the very end of the period covered by this cumulation, and the *School government chronicle* is still not included, a fact that should be borne in mind by anybody using the index to trace literature on this topic. Book reviews are unfortunately not indexed, but bibliographies appearing in the periodicals are.

Would some form of classified arrangement have been preferable to the alphabetical one adopted? Perhaps, if an ideal classification for so complex a subject as education were to be found; but the alphabetical arrangement seems adequate for most practical purposes. There has been sensible duplication of entries. In addition, there are annotations where obscure titles make them necessary.

If the H. W. Wilson Company's interest in British educational periodicals could be awakened, the *Education index* might widen its British coverage. Even if this happens—and it hardly seems probable that it would include as many British periodicals as are indexed by the *British education index*—the latter will still serve a useful purpose, as, devoted as it is to the native product, and with subject-headings derived from British conditions and terminology, it will bring relevant material to light more easily. The *Education index* has the advantage of more frequent publication at present; there is a two years' gap between the present date and the last periodicals

ESTABLISHED 1868

J. STARR & SONS, LTD.

Specialist Library Bookbinders

**Dawber Street Works
Wigan, Lanes.**

Phone: 2 line,
3484-5

'Grams: Starrs 3484
Wigan

One Quality only—The Best

WOODFIELD & STANLEY

LIMITED

SPECIALISTS IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Wakefield Road, Moldgreen, Huddersfield

AND

THE CHILDREN'S BOOKSHOP

64, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

indexed in this cumulation. Perhaps, therefore, it may be hoped that, if sufficient demand is roused, the four-monthly issues of the *British Education index* may become available for more general distribution, and the only serious cause for complaint about this publication be thus done away with.

JOAN M. TURNER, B.A., F.L.A., *Paddington Public Library.*

***Cataloguing and Classification ; Some Aspects ;
A Symposium***

Birmingham, West Midlands Division.

A very useful pamphlet containing six papers, which could add 10 per cent. to the Group A pass list. Miss Norris is as usual stimulating with her "random thoughts" and almost every sentence could start a lengthy argument. I think she intends this paper to be taken as such rather than a categorical statement. She does provide food for thought not only for students but practising cataloguers also.

Mr. Batty and Miss Higgs give excellent descriptions of Birmingham's reclassification. This paper does emphasize the opportunities for initiative in the older systems. The many new libraries offer great scope for new ideas, but the older libraries do also and the younger professional may look upon them with disfavour simply because they are old.

Mr. Taylor and Mr. Sheppard deal expertly with examination technique in A (iii). It is an established fact that some good candidates fail purely through lack of 'exammanship' and much has been written on the subject. These are valuable contributions to the subject and worth an hour of anybody's valuable time.

Philip Record will be sadly missed by many librarians and this is probably his last contribution to the professional press. It is an eclectic work on the formulation of subject headings in which he summarizes the theory from the major codes in a useful form.

The whole work marks the Golden Jubilee of the West Midlands Division of the A.A.L. and being concerned with student problems is most appropriate. My most serious criticism is that it is wholly conceived from the public library angle. Surely some benevolent college, university government or industrial librarian could have been inveigled into writing something from his own point of view?

T. BRIMELOW, F.L.A., *Lecturer, Leeds School of Librarianship.*

A.A.L. NEWS

The Re-organisation Sub-committee

Members elected by Council:

W. S. H. ASHMORE (Sheffield).
ARTHUR JONES (Paddington).
JOHN H. JONES (Hertfordshire).
GEOFFREY LANGLEY (Nottingham).
GEOFFREY SMITH (Hampshire).

The Officers of the A.A.L.:

W. HOWARD PHILLIPS (*President*).
W. G. THOMPSON (*Vice-President*).
JOHN HOYLE (*Honorary Secretary*).
H. G. HOLLOWAY (*Hon. Treasurer*).
PETER LABDON (*Honorary Editor*).

Three of the elected members and five of the total Sub-Committee are under 35; one is under 30. Three members are from County libraries, seven from municipal authorities.

The Sub-Committee met for the first time on June 8th at Chaucer House and decided to base its deliberations upon a memorandum submitted by Mr. J. H. Jones, whilst at the same time taking into account additional suggestions from within the sub-committee as the investigation proceeded. The Sub-Committee would welcome comment from both divisions and individuals within the A.A.L. such as Mr. Thompson's article published in this issue. Such material should reach the Honorary Secretary for private consideration or the Honorary Editor for publication as soon as possible. Broadly, the Sub-Committee considered the Association initially from two levels—its purpose, as defined and as established by precedent; and its structure. The first meeting lasted three-and-a-half hours and some headway was made in general terms, though it should be emphasised that it is not envisaged that the investigation should be a speedy one in view of the lasting effect the implementation of any of its recommendations may have. Perhaps it would not be impolitic to stress that the Sub-Committee is willing to take into account any representations made to it. Corporately it is the servant of the Association.

General News

Leyton Public Library has recently received a good deal of acclaim for the quality of its "Personal Booklist" service and for the design and presentation of the printed subject bibliographies which are produced as occasion arises. The "Personal Booklist" service includes the compilation of selective bibliographies on any subject for which there appears to be a demand, and these are typed on to a specially printed form advising the potential reader of the whereabouts of each book, but emphasising that these may be obtained through one service point if it is more convenient to the reader. About sixty lists of this sort are produced each year. The printed subject bibliographies are compiled to supplement exhibitions and are pleasantly printed by the Corporation's Printing Department using mechanical tints in some cases with text set by Varityper and printed by Multilith offset via Xerox to produce paper masters. The lists are designed by J. R. Pain, Leyton's senior Technical Assistant, who must find great satisfaction in this work. All in all, a good example of what a library service can provide in the way of professional help to those who need it.

Islington Public Library figures in the prize list for the John Cotton Dana Publicity awards, the American library profession's principal awards in this field sponsored by the A.L.A. and the *Wilson Library Bulletin*. Islington received a special certificate for "tackling the problem of reaching readers and arriving at a direct solution through systematic, street-by-street distribution of library material." Principally, a printed brochure

explaining the library's services is distributed by library employees in door to door coverage of non-readers. Islington is the only non-American library to figure in the list of awards.

Andre Deutsch, the publishers, announce that they have purchased the firm of Grafton & Co., traditionally library publishers, which includes the *Library World*. Deutsch intend to continue Grafton's publishing policy and the *Library World* appears to be in no danger of discontinuation. Five new titles will appear this year on various aspects of librarianship.

Late Correspondence

Punched transaction cards.

Mr. A. C. Jones writes: "I am sorry to have to point out two errors in my article in the June *Assistant Librarian*. The first is the statement on page 109 that I.C.T. 40-column centre-punched cards, size 5 x 12 cms. may be of 'former Hollerith type with rectangular slots.' Hollerith-type cards are not in fact available in this size, though a wide 38-column card, of similar proportions to Coventry's I.B.M. card, could possibly be used. To the best of my knowledge, however, all libraries using centre-punched cards, except Coventry, use Powers-Samas type equipment.

"The second error, which occurred after proof-reading, is in the list of libraries known to be using centre-punched cards given on page 113. This should have read: 'Brentford and Chiswick, Chelmsford, Croydon, Finsbury, Hampstead, Hull, Paddington, Reading and Woolwich. (Hendon can now be added to this list). Coventry use I.B.M. 80-column cards cut down to 51 columns, size 3½ in. x 4½ in. Coventry should be deleted from the list of libraries using unpunched cards for hand-sorting.'"

A.A.L. Correspondence Courses

Revision Courses, September—December 1961

A limited number of Registration and Final Courses will be available to run from September to December. These short courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required. Overseas students are ineligible.

The closing date for application is 25th August, 1961, or the seventh day after notification of the summer examination results, whichever is the later.

Full Length Courses, November 1961—November 1962

Application for First Professional, Registration and Final courses beginning in November, 1961, must be completed and returned by 30th September, 1961. Full particulars of course offered are given in the current edition of the Student's Handbook.

Forms, Fees and Enquiries

Requests for application forms must be accompanied by stamped addressed envelopes and should be sent to the A.A.L. Hon. Education Officer, J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21. The fee for each course, both revision and full length, is £3 10s. 0d. Students outside Europe taking full length courses are charged 10s. extra for each course.

WASTELL'S

Educational Supply Service

**THE PUBLIC AND COUNTY
LIBRARY BOOKSELLERS**

806 HIGH ROAD, LONDON, N.17

TOT 3354/8

ASKEWS OF PRESTON

**KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE
BRITISH ISLES FOR
EFFICIENCY, SERVICE
AND COURTESY**

—
**ESTABLISHED OVER
75 YEARS**
—

**JAMES ASKEW AND SON, LTD.
CORPORATION STREET
PRESTON**





A. M. HALDANE LTD.

Although

WE SPECIALISE IN
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

We also have a comprehensive stock of

NON-FICTION
FICTION

CHEAP FICTION
REPRINTS

OVERSTOCKS
REMAINDERS

and will be happy to
receive your requests and
wants lists.

We have now instituted a
new URGENT SERVICE;
WHY NOT TRY IT?

You will always be assured
of a warm welcome at our
showrooms at

5, DENMARK STREET,
CHARING CROSS ROAD,
W.C.2

COVent Garden 0488

THE HOLT-JACKSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showrooms:
59, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250

HOLMES

LIBRARY SERVICE

**SUPPLIERS TO TOWN AND COUNTY, UNIVERSITY
AND COLLEGE, AND INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARIES
IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD**

**AGENTS FOR
THE H. W. WILSON CO.'S LIBRARY
AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PUBLICATIONS
AND FOR
THE DEWEY DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION**

W. & R. HOLMES (Books) LIMITED

P.O. BOX No. 192

3-11 DUNLOP STREET - GLASGOW